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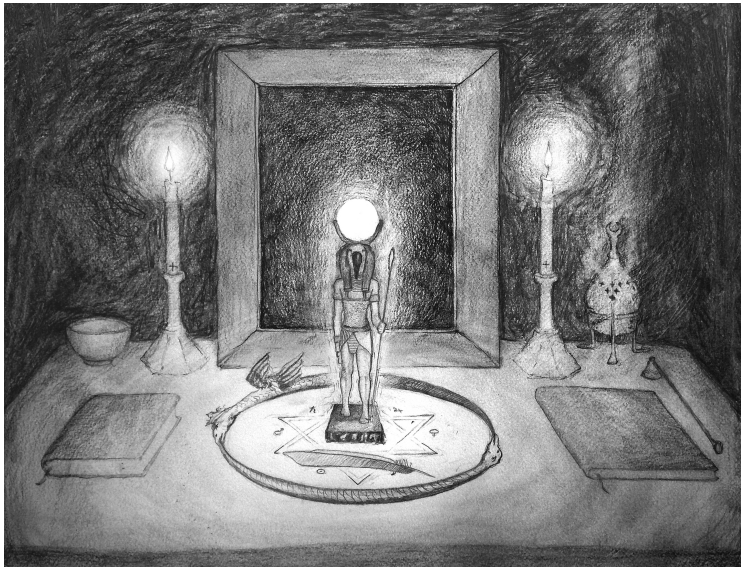
THE LITURGY OF ✠ HERMES ✠



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IN PRAISE OF THE LORD OF LIGHT

The Liturgy of Hermes
In Praise of the Lord of Light

The Institute for Hermetic Studies
Limited Edition

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PREPARATION
OF THE
PLACE OF WORSHIP

1. While this is a Secret or Initiatic Practice, Outer rules regarding cleanliness are to be observed.
   Outer Cleanliness
   (1) The area of practice is to be kept clean and orderly.
   (2) Your physical body, including hair and breath, are to be clean.
   Inner Cleanliness
   (1) Alcohol and drugs are not to be consumed.
   (2) Diet is to be plain, preferably vegetarian, or at least no meat or fish (things with the gift of sight).
   Secret Cleanliness
   (1) One is to keep all of one's vows, in particular the avoidance of sin in thought, word, or deed.
   (2) One is to confess one's errors and sins daily, and
   (3) forgive those who have injured them, or whom they believe to have injured them, and to bless all beings, wishing for all souls, be they among the living or the dead, human, animal, or spiritual, that they too be blessed with the grace of inner Illumination.
2. Offerings are to be placed in small bowls, eight in number, in a straight line in front of (or in two lines of four, one on each side at an angle to) the area of working. They contain offerings of all that is desirable and precious, such as food, water, wine, coins, jewels, seeds, flowers, grains, oils, unlit incense, a small lit candle, etc. Size is irrelevant, and smaller bowls work

best, as they are more manageable. The first bowl or dish will contain a small lit candle, the second one water, the third one flowers, the fourth one precious or semi-precious stones or metals, the fifth one coins (such as copper or silver), the sixth one unlit incense, the seventh one olive oil, and the eighth one red wine. They may also be filled simply with water, save one with red wine if possible, and visualized filled with an abundance of good and desirable things. Live flowers, water, and wine are to be disposed of and replaced as needed to keep them fresh.

3. It is desirable to have an Ibis feather present, but not required. If none is available, any large, clean, natural feather will make a suitable substitute.
4. A statue of Thoth, or a suitable picture, such as is often found in illustrations of Egyptian temples.
5. An altar cloth upon which the image described at the end of this Liturgy is given.
6. Water and container for blessing and purification.
7. Two candles for illumination. Beeswax candles are preferred. However, clean white candles, or olive oil votives, will suffice.
8. Additional candles for illumination if needed.
9. Frankincense resin or tears, charcoal, sand, and fire-proof brass or glazed burner for safe use.
10. Clean white robe of linen,[1] with cotton as a suitable substitute. No additional jewelry, vestments, or paraphernalia is to be worn.

Notes begin on page 21.

Preliminary

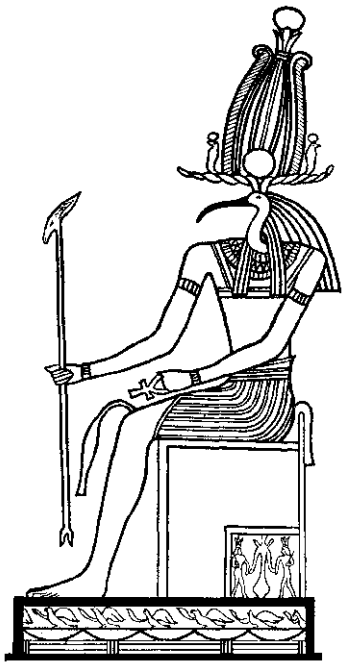
This Liturgy[2] was composed by me, Chiaphium of Lusernne, a Child of Hermes, at the urging and request of my Sons and Daughters, who through Hermetic Adoption, I fulfilled my obligation to, with this method of attaining the Vision of the Midnight Sun, that they may realize the same light as me, and spread it to the world in this degenerate and dark age. This was done on the 7th day of the Sign of the Twins, in the 6010 Year of the Temple. May all who read, recite, practice, see, touch, or hear of this Liturgy in any manner whatsoever be blessed and brought fully and completely onto the Path of Light.

Hear me! For I am Hermes, and I give this Liturgy to you that you may realize that you and I are One!

The Liturgy Proper

The Liturgy consists of four phases:

i. Confession of the Faith
ii. Offerings
iii. Praxis
iv. Blessing and Dedication



I

CONFESSION OF THE FAITH

Preliminary

Imagine a brilliant point of light before you. It is about the size of a marble, clear and radiant, and its light is joyous and warm, radiating to within "an arrow's shot"[3] from it in all directions.

Recite

I am Poimandres,[4] the Nous[5] of the Supreme. I know what you wish and I am with you everywhere. Hold in your mind all that you wish to learn and I will teach you. Know that which sees and hears within you is the Word of the Lord, and the Mind is God the Father, the Creator, and that the Mind and the Word are not separate from each other but are one, united in life.

Preliminary

Imagine that all has become light,[6] a sweet and joyous light. Imagine that your own mind is filled with this light and immeasurable power.

Recite

Mind is life and light, and brought forth all that is and man, and man desired to create as Mind created, and was given the authority to create by Mind, the Father, and creation, his Brothers, and, having acquired knowledge of their essence, and partaking of their nature, he wished to know the source of all.

General Invocation[7]

Hermes, eternal messenger,
Guardian of the invisible door,
We invoke Thee!

Hermes, bearer of the secret flame,
The true light of mind,
We invoke Thee![8]

Hermes, patron of scribes,
Dispeller of ignorance,
We invoke Thee!

Make open the revelations in the eternal book.
Arouse the serpents within us.
Exalt the winged globe of the spirit.
Awaken the sleeping children of the earth,
And raise them to the stars.

I call out to you today, father, holy, holy, the one who dwells in the holy place, fair one, god, invisible one, incomprehensible, ineffable lord, god of gods. (Repeat this last line three times.)

Confession of Sins

Recite

I confess all my past errors and sins to you Lord of Law, True Witness of the Gods.[9] Direct my thoughts, words, and actions that they reflect the eternal splendor of joy and happiness that only wisdom can bring.

II

OFFERINGS

Recite

These offerings we give to you Eternal Hermes, all good and favorable, that in and through them you may work your wonders in the Two Lands.[10] Fire that you may see, water that you may drink, fine scents that you may be joyful – the key to all happiness – precious stones that you may express the powers of earth, coins that you may have wealth, incense that you may forever keep the temple rites, oil that the lamp of the mysteries be forever lit, and wine that you may be refreshed after labor.

Prayer for the Offerings

The fire is laid, the fire sparkles;
The incense is laid on the fire, the incense sparkles.
My fragrance comes to you O gods, your fragrance comes to me O gods.
May I be with you O gods, may you be with me O gods.
May I live with you O gods, may you live with me O gods.
May I love you O gods, may you love me O gods.

Hear my words Lord Thoth, the words of Osiris, the Luminous One, "Gods are

immortal men, and men are mortal gods,"
and we shall live as one.

IAO![11] (Repeat this last word seven times.)

III

PRAXIS

Preliminary

The image of Thoth-Hermes that is before you on the altar is now visualized in detail as being of luminous light. It is nearly transparent, vibrant, devoid of any sense of heaviness or materiality, and emanating a vibrant halo of fiery light. He is standing on a white lotus, luminous and clear. The area around Him is dark and watery, also clear, as these are the primordial waters of creation.

Recite

You stand upon the lotus flower of the First Time, the origin of all things.
Your skin shines like beaten gold in the noon-day sun, and
Your head is crowned with the lunar bark and solar disc, uniting all opposites within yourself.
Your body is adorned with bracelets, collar, skirt, and sandals.

In your right hand is the phoenix staff with which you destroy ignorance, restrain evil, and guide your children on the Path of Truth.

In your left hand is the papyrus and quill, with which you write your Words of Power

to instruct the children of men in the ways of eternal wisdom.

Invocation

Accept our offerings Lord Hermes, Lord of Mind.
Be here with us in your many expressions:[12]

Lord of Strength, Lord of Magic, Ancient and Great One;
The Moon Shining in the Heavens;
Who Gives Life to Men;
Who Accomplishes Truth;
Universal Benefactor;
Who Made Eternity;
Splendid in Speech;
Great in Power;
He That Knows the Two Lands;
The Messenger;
Path Opener;
Great in Magic;
Might in His Words;
Sound of Heart and Hand;
Benefactor;
Gracious One Who Can Avert Evil;
Silent One;
Whose Stylus Protected the Lord of All;
Self-Begotten;
True Witness for the Gods;
Lord of Life and Joy;
Lord of Speech;
Lord of Triumph;
Lord of Laws;

Lord of Eternity;
Lord of Magic;
Who Gives Length of Life to Him in His Favor;
Ibis, Splendid in Magic;
Reckoner of Time;
Who Protects the Two Lands;
Excellent Scribe of the Divine Books;
Who Increases Time, and Multiplies the Years;
Who Makes Osiris Triumphant Against His Foes;
Guide of Heaven, Earth, and the Netherworld;
Who Drives Away Evil;
Who Made All that Exists;
Who Created Purification;
Whose Word Established the Two Lands.

Recite

Come to the earth, show thyself to me here today. Thou art Thoth, thou art he that came forth from the heart of the great Agathodæmon,[13] the father of all the gods; come to the mouth of my vessel today and answer me in truth everything that I inquire about.

Instruct me in the wisdom of God as you yourself were instructed. Reveal to me the Supreme Good, beauty, bliss, every excellence and eternity. As eternity, the essence of all, instills immortality and permanence into matter, so it orders the cosmos – the body of the God – for the creator, the Mind, is in everything.

Preliminary

- Imagine rays of light[14] streaming forth from the image before you and reaching out to the entire cosmos, penetrating the depths of the earth, water, air, and fire, the height of the heavens, and all of the celestial spheres, including the realms of astral darkness, the hells, and by doing so, bringing light, life, and love to all the beings that reside in these domains: human, animal, demon, angel, deceased suffering in purgatory, those being reborn, those in the process of dying – all are filled with light, wisdom, and joy.
- Imagine that light shines forth from these realms back into the image, and it is even more brilliant than before.
- Imagine a brilliant ray of white light[15] emanating from the brow of the image and entering into your brow,[16] filling your body with light and even radiating beyond. This white light purifies you of all physical impurities, which vanish instantly upon being touched by it. Your body is light, luminous, and like crystal in clarity.
- Imagine a brilliant ray of red light emanating from the throat of the image and entering your throat, filling your body with brilliant red light. This light vivifies and enlivens your being, filling it with the energies of life itself. Your speech is strengthened, and your words become Law.
- Imagine a brilliant ray of blue light emanating from the heart of the image and entering your

heart, filling your body with brilliant blue light. This is the light of pure mind, and with it your mind is made expansive, broad, peaceful, and joyful. You see and understand all things through the illuminated mind of the Divine.

- Imagine a brilliant ray of golden light emanating from the navel of the image and entering your navel, filling your entire body with brilliant golden light. This is the light of pure action, being, the total manifestation of pure thought, word, and deed as a single expression of consciousness. The union of above and below, the "operation of the Sun," is "consummated."

Recite

I have sinned in Thought, Word, and Deed, Lord Hermes, and through the healing power of your mercy, my sins are cleansed, my body made whole, my speech pure, and mind joyful.

Do not be unaware of me, O god, know me, for I know you. Do not be unaware of me, O god, of me it is said, "the transitory one." Do not be unaware of me, O Thoth, know me for I know you.

You have your heart, O Thoth, you have your legs, O Thoth, you have your arms, O Thoth; so too my heart is my own, my legs are my own, my arms are my own.

My heart is your heart, O Thoth; my legs are your legs, O Thoth; my arms are your arms, O Thoth. Your heart is my heart, O Thoth; your legs are my legs, O Thoth; your arms are my arms, O Thoth – we are One.

You have said Lord Hermes, "You can even become a god if you want, for it is possible. Therefore want and understand and believe and love: then you have become it."

Your speech is my speech, and my speech is your speech, we are One, O Lord Thoth!
Your body is my body, and my body is your body, we are One, O Lord Thoth!
Your mind is my mind, and my mind is your mind, we are One, O Lord Thoth!

Gold is the flesh of the gods, and through you my body is the translucent, effulgent golden light of the sun, the Word made flesh, the Mind, the very essence of the gods.

I know you and you know me, for we are one. I stand among the Sons of Hermes.[17]

My lifetime is eternity, my limit is everlasting. He whose appearance is Appearance itself, whose endurance is Endurance itself.

With my Mind I see Mind, I know the One that awakens me from forgetfulness. I see my own mind. I am afraid to speak, for I have found the source of all powers that has no beginning. I see a fountain spilling forth with Life. I am Mind! I have seen! I have found what I seek! I know peace in your purpose, and by your will, I am born anew! Language is inadequate.

I sing a song with the gods in silence, for naught but silence can express.

IAO! (Repeat these vowels seven times.)

Perform the following gesture: place the index finger of your left hand to your lips to signify the cosmic silence.

Praxis

Rest, breathe, and sit in the silence of your own being. Know that it is the Mind, Word, and Light of the One that Thoth as your friend and guide has led you to – the very center of yourself. Contemplate yourself as possessing all of the qualities of Thoth as previously described.

IV

Blessing and Dedication

Recite

You who drive away all evil and bring blessings upon your children and the land, shower down your goodness, and upon all inhabitants of the Two Lands – those born, and those yet to be born; those who live, and those who have passed over; human, animal, or god; faithful follower of the Way, or sinner who walk upside down in hell – shed the light of wisdom, joy, life, and triumph, that all may be as one in the Eternal from which you came.

Closing

(Additional prayers, spontaneous or as given at the end of this Liturgy, may be said at this point, or simply sit in meditation, or close with the following.)

Recite

Go, blessed Lord Hermes, to where you live eternally, as is your will.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

THE SECRET HYMNODY

Let every nature of the world receive the utterance of my hymn!

Open, thou Earth! Let every bolt of the Abyss be drawn for me! Stir not, ye Trees!

I am about to hymn creation's Lord, both All and One.

Ye Heavens open, and ye Winds stay still; and let God's Deathless Sphere receive my word! For I will sing the praise of Him who founded all; who fixed the Earth, and hung up Heaven, and gave command that Ocean should afford sweet water to the Earth, to both those parts that are inhabited, and those that are not, for the support and use of every man; who made the Fire to shine for gods and men for every act.

Let us together all give praise to Him, sublime above the Heavens, of every nature Lord! 'Tis He who is the Eye of Mind; may He accept the praise of these my Powers!

Ye Powers that are within me, hymn the One and All, sing with my Will, Powers all that are within me!

O blessed Gnosis, by thee illumined, hymning through thee the Light that mind alone can see, I joy in joy of Mind.

Sing with me praises, all ye Powers!

Sing praise, my Self-control; sing thou through me, my Righteousness, the praises of the Righteous; sing thou, my Sharing-all, the praises of the All; through me sing, Truth, Truth's praises!

Sing thou, O Good, the Good! O Life and Light, from us to you our praises flow!

Father, I give Thee thanks, to Thee Thou Energy of all my Powers; I give Thee thanks, O God, Thou Power of all my Energies.

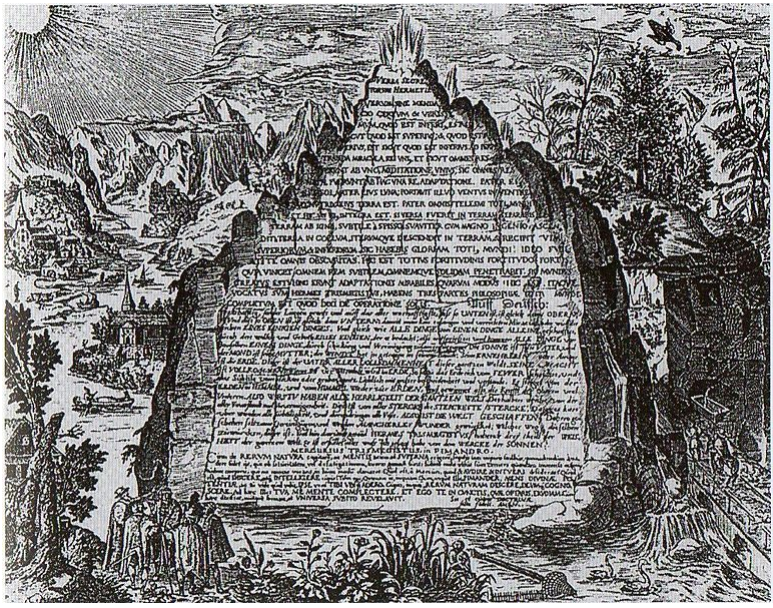
Thy Reason sings through me Thy praises. Take back through me the All into Thy Reason – my reasonable oblation!

Thus cry the Powers in me. They sing Thy praise, Thou All; they do Thy Will. From THEE, Thy Will; To Thee, the All. Receive from all their reasonable oblation. The All that is in us, O Life, preserve; O Light, illumine it; O God, inspirit it!

It is Thy Mind that plays the Shepherd to Thy Word, O Thou Creator, Bestower of the Spirit upon all.

For Thou art God; Thy Man thus cries to Thee, through Fire, through Air, through Earth, through Water, and through Spirit, through Thy creatures.

'Tis from Thy Æon I have found Praise-giving; and in Thy Will, the object of my search, have I found Rest.[18]



THE EMERALD TABLET OF HERMES

True, without error, certain & most true:[19]

That which is above is as that which is below, & that which is below is as that which is above, to perform the miracles of the One Thing.

And as all things were from One, by the mediation of One, so from this One Thing come all things by adaptation.

Its father is the Sun; its Mother is the Moon; the wind carried it in his belly; the nurse thereof is the Earth.

It is the father of all perfection, & the consummation of the whole world.

Its power is integral if it be turned to earth.

Thou shalt separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, gently and with much ingenuity.

It ascends from Earth to Heaven and descends again to Earth, and receives the power of the superiors and the inferiors.

Thus thou hast the glory of the whole world; therefore let all obscurity flee before thee.

This is the strong fortitude of all fortitude, overcoming every subtle and penetrating every solid thing.

Thus the world was created.

Hence are all wonderful adaptations, of which this is the manner.

Therefore am I called "Thrice Great Hermes," having the Three Parts of the philosophy of the whole world.

That is finished which I have to say concerning the operation of the Sun.

APPENDIX

A NOTE REGARDING EGYPTIAN THEOSOPHY

Egyptian theosophy is complex, and not all of its ideas regarding the non-physical aspects of man are understood. In general, the physical body is the *khat*. The *sekhem* may be an ideal form that the consciousness, or what we would call the astral body, takes in the spiritual worlds. This does not mean that the sekhem *is* the astral body, only the archetypal or ideal form that it appears as. This is similar to the notion stated in Christian literature (and elsewhere) that in heaven, human beings appear in the flower of their beauty, or between 30 and 35 years of age. However, here, that archetypal or perfect form includes spiritual and intellectual beauty as well as physical beauty, or, rather, the appearance of the physical in the spiritual state. The *ren* is a person's name. The *ab* is the heart, the seat of knowledge and wisdom, the link between the inner and outer aspects of man. The *khu* is his radiant spiritual knowledge as revealed by the gods, or what we would call intuition.

TIMING & DURATION OF THE LITURGY

This Liturgy is to be performed for 42 days in succession, starting with a Waxing or New Moon, preferably in the Sign of Cancer.[20] After this initial period, it may be performed daily, weekly, or monthly as time permits. The preferred day of the week for practice is Monday or Wednesday; the preferred day of the month is the day of the Full Moon. The Hermetic Retreat may be performed annually, if you desire.

The Altar Cloth

In the altar cloth image we use (see following page), the top serpent faces LEFT, and the bottom serpent faces RIGHT. Above the top serpent is the alchemical symbol for SALT. Below the bottom serpent are the symbols for SULPHUR, FIRE, and AIR (connected to form a diamond shape), and the SUN.

Inside the center of the triangles are the symbols of Sulphur, Mercury, and Salt, in descending order.

Inside the upper LEFT and RIGHT corners of the star is the alchemical symbol for AIR.

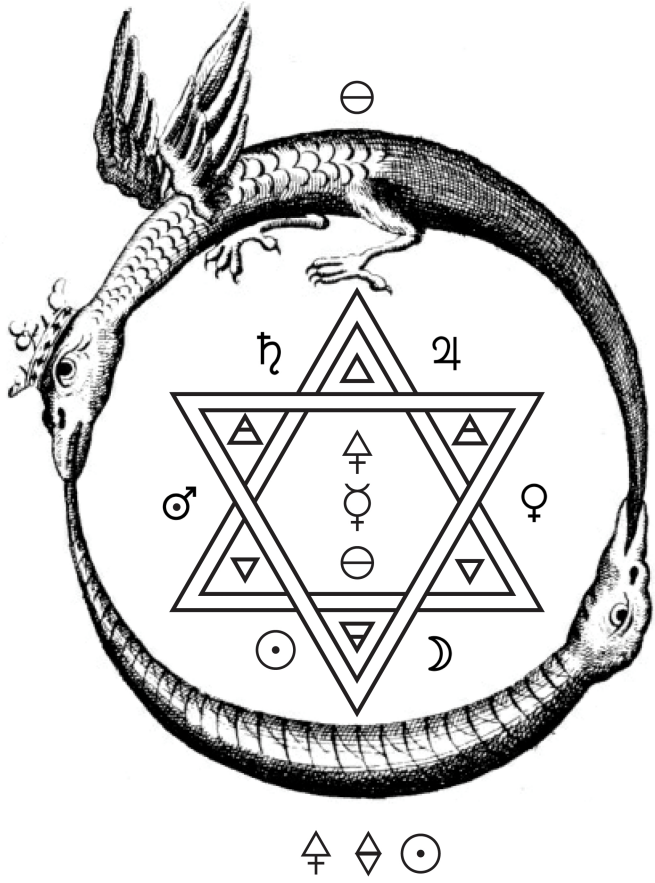
Inside the lower LEFT and RIGHT corners of the star is the alchemical symbol for WATER.

Inside the apex of the star is the alchemical symbol for FIRE, and inside the lowest point (nadir) of the star is the alchemical symbol for EARTH.

Outside, the APEX is flanked by the symbols of Saturn (left) and Jupiter (right); the NADIR is flanked by the Sun (left) and Moon (right). Mars is outside the left center point, and Venus is outside the right center point.

The whole is to be drawn in black on white cloth. The colors of the serpents in green may be added, and the triangles (upper pointing) in yellow and (lower pointing) blue.

Draw this to the best of your ability and with devotion, and not concern for exact reproduction of the shapes.



Notes

[1]Plutarch tells us that linen was worn by the Egyptian priests "on account of the colour which the flax in flower sends forth, resembling the ethereal radiance that surrounds the cosmos."

[2]*Liturgy* is the proper term for Western spiritual practices, be they exoteric or esoteric. "Liturgy" is from the Late Latin word *liturgia*, which derives from the Greek word *leitourgia*, meaning "the work of the people." In this case, we may look upon public and communal worship as the *Lesser Work* and individual and private practices, such as this, as the *Greater Work*. The Lesser Work is neither inferior to the Greater, nor is the Greater superior to the Lesser, as each is dependent upon the other, and are both for the same purpose – spiritual illumination – by different means and under different conditions.

[3]The distance given varies from about 40 feet to 100 yards or more. Allow the distance to grow as your stability in the practice grows.

[4]Good Shepherd.

[5]Mind.

[6]Plotinus states in his essay *On Intelligible Beauty*,

> Let us, then, form a mental image of this cosmos with each of its parts remaining what it is, and yet interpenetrating one another, [imagining] them all together into one as much as we possibly can...together with all things that could be seen in it. Let there then be in the soul some semblance of a sphere of light, having all things in it, whether moving or still, or some moving and others still. And holding this sphere in mind, conceive of thyself another sphere, removing [from it all ideas of] mass; take from it also [the idea of] space, and the phantom of matter in thy mind...then invoking God who hath made [that true sphere] of which you holdest the phantom [image in thy mind], pray that He may come. And He may come with his own cosmos and all the Gods therein – He being one and all, and each one all, united into one, yet different in their powers, and yet, in that one [power] of multitude all one.

[7]A general description of Thoth's power and place in the cosmic scheme. More detailed descriptions of his powers are given elsewhere in the Liturgy.

[8]The *Corpus Hermeticum* states:

> See that everything co-exists within Mind. All Times and all places. All things of all shapes and sizes. Then you will know Atum [God]. If it is possible to talk of the substance of Atum, then Mind is the very divine substance – although only Atum knows its precise nature. Mind is not separate from Atum [God], but emanates from him like light from the sun. In human beings, Mind produces divinity. Through Mind some become godlike, for as Osiris teaches: "Gods are immortal men and men are mortal gods."
>
> Mind is the divine part of a human being, which is capable of rising to heaven. The material part, consisting of fire, water, earth, and air, is mortal and remains earthbound so that he does not abandon the body that has been entrusted to him. Soul is nourished by fire and air, and the body by water and earth, Mind the fifth part, which comes from light, and is bestowed upon humankind alone... Mind and speech are great gifts that Atum [God] has bestowed on humans alone. Used wisely, they make man like the immortal gods – only different in that he is incarnate in a physical form. When he leaves this body, Mind and Speech will be his guides, leading him to join the company of the gods and other souls that have attained the Supreme Bliss... Immerse yourself in Mind and recognize the purpose of your birth...find True Knowledge and become complete.

[9]"Gods" refers to (1) impersonal universal forces and intelligences; (2) our highest ideals; as well as (3) the process of divine inspiration, or illumination, where insight is attained. Irreverence is (1) acting blasphemously with regard to these forces; (2) acting hypocritical to our ideals; or (3) ignoring or squandering those insights our practices bring.

[10]The "Two Lands" are Upper and Lower Egypt. Here it refers to the visible and invisible worlds of matter and spirit.

[11]"IAO" (pronounced with vowel sounds lengthened; the "I" is pronounced like the vowel sound in "tree," the "A" like the first vowel in "father," and the "O" as in "go": "eeeh–aaah–oooh") is a peculiar pronunciation of the Hebrew name of God, YHVH, wherein it is thought of not as a person, but as an impersonal magical energy. This is the most common of vocalizations in the Classical Hermetic literature, and is aimed at invoking all of the powers of the invisible into visible manifestation, although it appears that those of Saturn, Sol, and Luna are the channels of invocation.

[12]The "Eight Expressions of Thoth" are his primary forms as: (1) Creator of the Two Lands; (2) lawmaker and judge; (3) scribe and master of the book; (4) lord of life and physician; (5) magician and priest, master of the temple; (6) destroyer of evil; (7) benefactor; (8) guide and path opener. In medieval, Renaissance, and contemporary Hermeticism, these expressions can be seen in the roles of: (1) Thoth as Hermes, the Greek Messenger of the Gods; (2) Thoth as the Medieval Philosopher; (3) Thoth as Renaissance Magician; (4) Thoth as Initiator into the Mysteries, the Masonic Master; (5) Thoth as Christian Rosenkreutz, the Immortal Adept; (6) Thoth as Alchemist; (7) Thoth as Astrologer, Measurer of Time; (8) Thoth as Scholar of the Arcane Arts and Sciences.

The corresponding "Eight Liturgies of Hermes" are as follows:

1. In Praise of the Lord of Light (general devotional – Creator of the Two Lands)
2. The Golden Helm Reborn (cycles of light and dark – Guide and Path Opener)
3. The Golden Ibis Head (Destroyer of Evil)
4. Son of Wisdom (Scribe and Master of the Book)
5. Blessings of the Eternal Feast (Benefactor)
6. Artisan of the Holy Crafts (Master of the Temple)
7. Body of Luminous Splendor (Physician)
8. Holder of the Scales (Law and Judgemaker)

[13]Greek for "Good Spirit." Originally a spirit invoked at banquets that evolved later into a guardian deity often invoked by classical

magicians.

[14]Concerning "rays of fire and light," in Iamblichus's work *On the Mysteries* (Thomas Taylor translation, pp. 89-92), we read,

> ...with the Gods, indeed, there is acuteness and rapidity in the energies which shine forth with greater celerity than those of the intellect itself, though in themselves they are immoveable and stable... In addition...the magnitude of the manifestations in the Gods is so great as sometimes to conceal all heaven, the sun and moon; and the earth itself as the Gods descend... Hence, in the forms of the Gods which are seen by the eyes, the most clear spectacles of truth itself are perceived, which are also accurately splendid, and shine forth with an evolved light...replete with a fulgent light...the fire of the Gods shines forth with an indivisible and ineffable light and fills all profundities of the world...

[15]Red, White, and Blue (or Black) are among the most common of colors seen in ancient symbolism. The meaning of color is derived from (1) its inherent characteristics upon perception; (2) astrological associations; (3) associations formed by primitive logic, often related to the physical world. The meaning of these colors is complex; combined in this format of meditation, they represent a "complete" or whole person. In classical alchemy, one also sees the colors of black (sometimes blue for reasons we shall see), white, and red as the three progressions of the Art, with all things progressing towards their perfection in the Red Stage.

[16]There is scant mention of what we think of as psychic centers in the classical literature; however, we do see the repeated mention of the body being the dwelling place of the gods, as well as specific areas being repeatedly mentioned, including the head, throat, heart, and belly. Each has its unique aspect of power, with the head being concerned with earthly things, and as such the body as a whole; the throat with speech, both mundane and spiritual; the heart with wisdom, the true seat of mind; and the belly or navel with power, particularly magical and occult power (*heka* in Egyptian magic).

[17]The "Sons of Hermes" represent the chain of initiation linking students and adepts of Hermeticism across the centuries with Classical

Hermeticism, the wisdom of ancient Egypt, and even the primordial wisdom from which it arose during the First Time. During the Classical Period, all priests were seen as an aspect of Thoth, as by their role they took part in the functions of Thoth.

[18] *Corpus Hermeticum*, XIII.17-20.

[19] The Emerald Tablet (*Tabula Smaragdina*) is a general description of the cosmos and of the role of Hermes in it.

[20] Upon completion of this initial Hermetic Devotional, or Hermetic Retreat, notify the Institute for Hermetic Studies:

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